**Gophers and Rodents**

Below are a list of organic remedies that will help prevent gophers and rodents:

**- Hot pepper: To discourage cats, dogs, many insect pests, and snails from munching, dust powdered hot pepper or a spray of hot pepper sauce on plants.**  
**- If you have a problem with gophers digging in your lawn try this: put two or three bulbs of garlic, several chili peppers, and some water in your blender and blend well. Pour this down some of the gopher holes and rinse with a strong stream of water from the hose.  
- Mice sometimes completely girdle young fruit trees. Painting with standard tree wound paints is helpful. Or you might try covering the wounds with white corn syrup and then wrapping with aluminum foil.**

**- Painting the trunks of fruit trees with Tabasco sauce helps deter rabbits and mice.**

**Here is information I found on trapping gophers:**

**Box traps are recommended, which are the simplest and easiest type of gopher trap to use. You plant them in a main tunnel, which lies about 6 to 12 inches below the surface. (Find it by probing the ground around a mound on the side where you see a plug of fresh earth.)**

**Then dig down and set two traps with their open ends facing opposite directions into the tunnel. No bait is needed, but be sure to wear gloves when setting the traps. You don't want your scent to scare them away.**

**~~If you prefer not to trap, stay away from the poisons that contain strychnine. A poisoned gopher eaten by a cat, dog, or fox will poison that animal as well. Safer poisons use a bait laced with anticoagulants; internal bleeding kills the gopher (painlessly, I'm told) without endangering other animals. Just be sure to follow instructions for its safe use and disposal.**

**~~~I've read that gophers can't stand the smell of castor oil and that spraying a diluted mix on the ground is enough to make them leave. There's also evidence that gophers don't like mulch, so you could try mulching a buffer area around plantings. Or you could encourage predators to come feast on your rich gopher supply — installing owl boxes in a nearby woods might be a good start. {See apple guilds}**

**Here is a link to a website that describes the process of building a prevention around your trees from gophers.**

<http://www.ehow.com/how_8164139_protect-fruit-trees-gophers.html>

**Apple Diseases**

Below is the information found on curing apple diseases, these are organic remedies and most of which can be made in the home!

**- Garlic and onions: Grind up raw onions or garlic into a puree. Soak in warm water overnight and strain. Liquid can be sprayed on roses, fruit trees, and flowers. Kills aphids and apple borers. Scrape off any loose bark on the trunk and swab liquid on. Many gardeners mix onion water and wood ashes and paste mixture on tree trunks.  
  
- Here is a brew that will trap one of the worst enemies of your apple crop: the apple maggot. Mix one part molasses with nine parts water, then add yeast to produce fermentation. Pour this mixture into wide mouth jars and hang in nearby trees.**

**- Some insects that damage fruit trees crawl from the soil to the branches to lay their eggs. They can be stopped by wrapping the trunk with six to eight inches of tape or grease-resistant paper and applying Vaseline or other grease to the tape. Don't put Vaseline directly on the tree-it may cause damage.**

**- Chive Spray:  
For preventing apple scab and downy mildew on cucumber, pumpkin and zucchini.**

**To make: Put a bunch of chopped chives in a heat proof glass container, cover with boiling water. Let this sit until cool, strain and spray as often as two to three times a week.**

**Here is an article written about apple scab and the “organic” pesticides that may be used to prevent and control the disease.**

<http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/newsltr/v7n4/sa-8.htm>

**Here is an article on apple scab, the life cycle, prevention methods and information about the scab and how to prevent it.**

<http://www.caf.wvu.edu/kearneysville/organic-apple.html#IDENTIFYING>

**Here is an article on organic pest control!**

<http://treechange.hubpages.com/hub/ORGANIC-PEST-CONTROL-Recipes-and-Remedies>

**Here is an article on apple scab**

<http://www.caf.wvu.edu/kearneysville/disease_descriptions/omapscab.html>

**Apple tree scab**

**Prevention: Grow any member of the onion family around the base of the tree. Chives work the best. You can also make a tea from chives and use as a spray on your apple trees to help protect from scab.**

**-Plant resistant cultivars such as 'Prima', Priscilla', 'Freedom', 'Jonafree', 'Liberty', and 'Red Free'**

**-When planting, space trees to promote good air circulation**

**-Prune for increased air circulation**

**-Rake up and destroy dropped leaves in the fall**

**Control:**  
**Spray Neem oil or sulfur based fungicides which need to be applied weekly and immediately after each rain. Start from the time the buds break and continue until 3 to 4 weeks after flower petals fall. If sprays are applied early in the season, you may avoid the need to spray later on in the season.**

**FIRE BLIGHT   
*(Erwinia amylovora)***

**Fire blight is a bacterial disease that causes a sudden wilting, shriveling, and blackening or browning of shoots, blossoms, and fruit. Infection first occurs during bloom. Infected blossoms appear water-soaked and turn brown or black. The infections may then spread through the blossom-bearing stem, turning it black, and into the spur or main branch to form a canker. Rapid infection of extensive portions of the plant gives it a "scorched by fire" appearance with dead leaves remaining attached to twigs. Branch tips curl, giving them a "shepherd's crook" appearance. Cankers can form on twigs and branches, which may die back.**

**MEANS OF CONTROL**

**\*When tree is dormant, spray with neem oil, copper sulfate or bordeaux mix**

**\*\*Eliminate fire blight by pruning diseased branches back at least 6 inches (cm) into tissue that looks healthy and removing diseased wood.**

**\*To prevent spreading pathogens on infected tools, dip your pruning shears or saw in a diluted bleach solution (mix 1 part bleach to 5 parts water) after every cut. When you are finished, thoroughly disinfectant your tools in the bleach solution for several minutes.**

**CODLING MOTH**

**Adults are gray-brown moths with wingspans of 3/4 inches long. Their wings have a fine coppery brown, wavy pattern, and the forewings are tipped with dark brown. Larvae are pinkish white with brown heads up to 3/4 inches long. Eggs are white disks. Codling moth is prevalent throughout North America.**

**MEANS OF CONTROL**

**Home Remedy:**

**1 cup vinegar**

**1/3 cup dark molasses**

**1/8 tsp ammonia**

**4 2/3 cup water**

**Cut a 2 to 3 inch (5.1-7.6 cm) hole into the top of an empty 1 gallon milk jug. Place 3 inches (7.6 cm) of the solution in the bottom of the jug. Hang several of these in the tree. This works well for apples pears and others.**  
**Traditional Remedy:  
In the late winter, scrape bark to remove cocoons; apply dormant oil sprays. Use sticky tree bands or bands of corrugated cardboard to trap larvae leaving the tree to pupate. Check for larvae and destroy daily. Diligent trapping of the first generation will considerably reduce second the generation. In large orchards, use pheromone traps to determine the main flight periods of moths; then time sprays to coincide with egg hatch or release Trichogramma parasitic wasps to attack eggs. You can also use pheromone twist-tie dispensers throughout the trees to confuse males and prevent mating. If used together with the tree bands, control can be achieved.**

**Here is an article on the control of the codling moth by use of pheromone dispensers.**

<http://www.virginiafruit.ento.vt.edu/moth.html>

**Spraying Basics**

**1. It is best to use any type of spray in the early morning or the cool of evening. Do not spray when temps are above 80 degrees Fahrenheit! Your plants may "burn" or have a reaction to what you are using in excessive heat. This is known as "phytotoxicity."  
2. Always perform a test on a small portion of the plant material first. Wait 24 hours to observe any negative reaction. Proceed if there is no damage.  
3. Really and truly...more is not better. If you are not getting good results don't increase the strength of these remedies without testing first.  
4. Target just the area you need to treat. Be careful... try not to harm the good bugs! You don't want to run off your allies.  
5. When working with sprays or dusts always protect your exposed skin and face. Some of these ingredients can be very irritating to your skin, eyes and mucous membranes, especially any hot pepper sprays.**

**\*\*\*When spraying, make sure leaves and flowers are thoroughly covered and that fast expanding new leaves are protected with sprays.**